



## Bathing Baby



### What to Know

- It is not necessary to sponge or tub bathe your baby every day. Two to three times a week is fine.
- The face, hands and diaper area should be washed every day.
- Do not give a tub bath until the umbilical cord has fallen off.
- Always make sure the room is warm and free of drafts.
- Never leave a baby alone in the tub or on the counter top.
- Use a rubber mat, non-skid stickers or bath towel on the bottom of the tub.
- Water should be warm to the touch, neither too hot nor too cold. Test the water temperature with your elbow or inner wrist before placing the baby into the water.
- Use fresh water and a clean washcloth and towel for each baby.
- Clean the tub thoroughly with hot, soapy water after each use. Rinse well.
- Remember that not all babies love a bath. Some babies will cry because they do not like to be undressed or even have their diaper changed. The crying is not due to your inexperience. Try to keep most of your baby covered with a towel to avoid drafts.
- Use bath time to stroke, cuddle and talk to your baby. It can be a special time for both of you.



### What to Do

Get all of your supplies ready and place them near the bathing area before you start:

Plastic infant tub	Rubbing alcohol
Washcloth	and cotton swabs
Large soft towel	Baby brush/comb
Baby shampoo	Diaper
Baby soap	Change of clothing
Container for rinsing	Rubber mat

#### Sponge Bath:

- Leave your baby wrapped in a towel or blanket.
- Use a soft washcloth to wash the face with plain warm water. Do not use soap on the face.
- Clean the ears by using a corner of the washcloth and a finger. Never use a cotton-tipped swab in the ears.
- Shampoo the hair by tucking the baby under your arm and supporting the head with one hand. Hold baby's head over the warm water in the tub to wet the hair, apply a small amount of shampoo and gently wash and massage the baby's scalp with your fingers or a soft brush. Rinse well with clean, warm water and dry with a soft towel.
- You can wash the soft spot on top of the baby's head without hurting the baby.

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- Next, unwrap or undress the baby.
- Wet the baby's body with your hand or soft, wet washcloth.
- Gently wash or massage the baby by starting at the neck and working down the chest, arms, torso and top of the legs.
- Turn the baby to each side and rub the baby's back and down the back of the legs.
- Wash the diaper area last.
- Gently wash and rinse all the skin creases and folds.
- Rinse the baby's skin with warm water, using your hands or washcloth and keeping the cord and circumcision dry until healed.
- Gently blot the baby dry with a clean, soft towel.
- Apply rubbing alcohol to the cord if recommended by your health care provider.
- Diaper and dress the baby.
- Brush the baby's hair.

#### Tub Bath:

- Fill the baby bathtub one-third to one-half full of water (body temperature warmth). Test the water with your elbow or inner wrist.

- Use a rubber mat, non-skid stickers or bath towel on the bottom of the tub.
- Lay a folded towel on the counter next to the tub so the baby can be dried off comfortably.
- Wash the baby's face and hair as explained in the sponge bath section.
- Next, unwrap or undress the baby.
- Cradle your baby in your arms and then gently place the baby in the tub, supporting the baby with your hand. Never let go of the baby in the tub!
- Using the hand that is not supporting the baby, lather the baby's entire body with mild soap, making sure to wash all wrinkles and creases.
- For male babies, clean around the penis and scrotum. It is not necessary to pull back the foreskin.
- For female babies, clean between the folds (labia) from front to back.
- Rinse the baby's body thoroughly with clean, warm water.
- Take the baby out of the tub, wrap in a clean towel, and pat completely dry.
- Diaper and dress the baby.
- Brush the baby's hair.

